

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 710

By Overbey

A RESOLUTION relative to the elimination of Kiowa Warrior helicopters from United States Army and National Guard units.

WHEREAS, the United States Army and Department of Defense have proposed the elimination of all OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters as part of an aviation restructuring plan; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of this proposal would be particularly detrimental to the Tennessee Army National Guard's 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron, which is the only National Guard unit in the nation that flies these reconnaissance aircraft; and

WHEREAS, the proposal would eliminate the thirty Kiowas authorized for the 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron, including twenty based inside the perimeter of McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Alcoa and the ten aircraft authorized for the squadron's Jackson location; and

WHEREAS, the negative impact of the Army's proposal would also include the loss of 692 soldiers who support the Kiowas and the elimination of 113 full-time jobs and possibly two of the three Army flight facilities across the state; and

WHEREAS, the United States Army has experienced numerous failed attempts over the past several years in selecting the next generation of armed reconnaissance helicopters; Kiowa helicopters are capable of bridging the acquisition gap until the next generation is procured; and

WHEREAS, apparently the Pentagon agrees, as units of Tennessee's 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron who fly Kiowa Warriors are scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan with the aircraft later this year; and

WHEREAS, as Tennessee's Adjutant General, Major General Max Haston has succinctly pointed out: "I understand that the Kiowa is a legacy aircraft, but to eliminate them without a suitable replacement simply doesn't make sense."; and

WHEREAS, the National Guard has the most seasoned pilots and maintainers, and National Guard aircraft maintenance readiness levels are consistently better than the Guard's active component counterparts; and

WHEREAS, the proposal to eliminate the Kiowa helicopter from National Guard units is shortsighted, as it represents a waste of military expertise and a risky reduction in mission capability for the National Guard, which performs many crucial services at the state level in addition to its national defense mission; and

WHEREAS, this nation should be cautious in reducing the National Guard's expertise and resources, as the Guard has proven itself, time and time again, to be mission capable and indispensable to the modern U.S. military; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this General Assembly categorically expresses its opposition to the U.S. Army's aviation restructuring proposal to eliminate all Kiowa Warrior helicopters from the 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron, which proposal would destroy the squadron's resources and mission and result in the loss of 692 soldiers, 133 full-time jobs, and possibly two U.S. Army flight facilities in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the U.S. Army.